

**RESPONSE UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
EXPEDITED PROCEDURE – Art Unit 1753**

Attorney Docket No. 291958172US

Client Ref No. P01-0060

REMARKS

Claims 1-15, 21, 24-27, 34-40, 53-57 and 65-73 are presently pending. Claims 24 and 25 have been amended to correct an inadvertent error that occurred in the previous amendments filed in the response dated 7 October 2004. No additional fees are due for amending claims 24 and 25 because the number of independent claims does not exceed the highest number of independent claims for which payment was already made.

In the Office Action dated 21 January 2005, the claims were rejected as follows:

(A) Claims 24-27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112;

(B) Claims 1-15, 21, 24, 27, 34-40, 53-60 and 65-73 were rejected under the doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting.

A. Response to Section 112 Rejection

Claims 24-27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 on the grounds that the phrase "the ring" lacks sufficient antecedent basis. The undersigned apologizes for an error in rewriting claims 24 and 25 in independent form in the response mailed 7 October 2004. These claims have been amended to include the appropriate antecedent basis for the phrase "the ring." Therefore, this rejection under Section 112 should be withdrawn and claims 24-27 are in condition for allowance.

B. Response to Double Patenting Rejections

Claims 1-15, 21, 24, 27 and 34-38 were rejected under the doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting over claims 1-6 and 8-43 of copending U.S. Application No. 10/353,325. Claims 39, 40, 53-60 and 65-73 were rejected under the doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting over claims 80-108 of copending U.S. Application No. 10/409,690. Please find enclosed two Terminal Disclaimers with respect to copending U.S. Application Nos. 10/353,325 and 10/409,690. The applicants do not concede to the obviousness-type double patenting rejections over these

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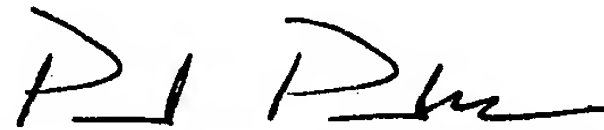
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copending applications, but rather the Terminal Disclaimers are submitted to expedite allowance of the pending claims in this application. Therefore, the obviousness-type double patenting rejections should also be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, the pending claims comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112 and are patentable over the art of record. The applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application and a mailing of a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner has any questions or believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to call the undersigned at (206) 359-3258.

Respectfully submitted,

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